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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to help all caregiving adults--parents, grandparents, guardians, care providers, friends, preschool teachers, and other educators--to make the best decisions for and about young children in the early childhood years before the start of formal schooling. The guide aims to help caregivers learn how to: enhance their observations; know each child; discover ways to build trust between children and adults; design pleasing, stimulating, safe, and comfortable learning environments; understand the importance of children's play; explore the role of communication between caregiver and child and its significance to the learning process; and evaluate childcare facilities and staff. Chapters discuss how the young child's surroundings can be shaped and what might productively happen in the setting, with specific examples, according to the following perspectives: play, learning, communication, words and books, television and videos, outdoor exploration, and development of surroundings that support and nurture a child's development. A list of helpful books for parents and caregivers is included. (AP)

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